1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

137 occurs at the higher elevations. Along the rivers and creeks, as well as in the forest, there is a profusion of red willow. Also interspersed in the forest are patches of quaking aspen (locally called poplar), birch, and cottonwood. The area contains many edible berries, including the strawberry, soapberry, low and high bush cranberry, raspberry, and blueberry. Along dry sloughs there is often a profusion of coarse grass, while niggerheads are found in an occasional swamp.

136 Animal life is quite abundant. Represented are large game animals such as the moose, woodland caribou, sheep, and goat and fur-bearing mammals like the lynx, mink, wolverine, otter, fox, coyote, wolf, beaver, and marten. Deer are rare. In the high mountains gopher and groundhog are numerous. The ubiquitous red squirrel is heard chattering everywhere and the spruce forests are overrun with the small trails worn by the feet of the Arctic hare (locally called rabbit). Fish are generally abundant in the lakes, mainly lake trout, whitefish, and jackfish (or pike). In the rivers the principal species are trout, grayling (sometimes called bluefish), and sucker.

The mosquito is a plague until the middle of August; the small "no-see-um" becomes a nuisance at about the time when the mosquito disappears and remains until late October. The gray mouse is a household pest whose numbers foil any attempt at eradication. Birds include the robin, crow, hoot owl, whiskey jack (or Canada jay), and various winter species like the grosbeak. There are also such fowl as the duck, goose, ptarmigan, willow grouse, and spruce hen. The two latter species are sometimes collectively referred to by the Indians as "chicken," although a distinction is recognized between them.

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101 131 619 The name "Kaska" is the conventional term adopted by anthropologists to designate a number of linguistically and culturally related Athapaskan Indian bands or tribes living in the area of northern British Columbia, southern Yukon Territory, and Northwest Territories in Canada.[1] The present monograph is the result of work done with four of these tribes, but does not include the Espato-tena, who dwell in the Northwest Territories, east of the Rocky Mountains and are ethnographically unknown. The term Kaska is largely synonymous with the less satisfactory designation, Nahani, which, although formerly used by the Kaska to refer to neighboring Indian groups, is not employed as a term of reference within the society.

The four tribes under discussion are locally identified with particular geographical regions, which are in turn definable by the rivers and lakes constituting their main drainage channels. Except possibly in British Columbia, where trap lines are now formally registered, the boundaries between tribal units are not precisely recognized by the members of any tribe. Figure 2 shows the locations of the four Kaska tribes and their hunting and trapping districts, although only the second two listed below call themselves Kaska.

1. The Frances Lake Indians, the most northern tribe, live around Frances Lake, Simpson Lake, and the upper Frances River.[2] Their country extends from the Pelly River watershed on the northwest to the Mackenzie Mountains in the east.

[1] Osgood, *The Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* (1936), 13.

[2] The Albees on their walk up the Frances River in 1942 found the first signs of Frances Lake Indian camping grounds above the middle canyon of that stream. Albee and Albee, *Family Afoot in the Yukon Wilds* (1942) 614.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

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FIG. 2. Map of Kaska and Adjacent Indian Groups.

[p. 34]

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

2. The Upper Liard Indians. This tribe consists of six families living along the Liard River from about eighteen miles north of the Alaska Highway crossing above Lower Post to within a hundred miles of that river's source. Their trapping ranges from the Cassiar Mountains on the west to the Simpson Mountains in the east, where they frequently encounter members of the Frances Lake Tribe.

3. The Dease River Indians are designated in the Indian Affairs Branch census as the Caoca Band. They occupy the basin of Dease Lake and Dease River north to Lower Post and also range west along Blue River and McDame Creek to the Height of Land.

4. The Nelson Indians are the most easterly of these four tribes.[2] They live east of Lower Post on both the north and south banks of the Liard River and range up the Hyland, Smith and, for a short distance at least, Muddy (or Kechika) Rivers. Families trapping south along the Muddy River meet the Tselo'na and Bear Lake Indians (both Sekani groups). A number of Nelson Indians trapping south of the Liard and up the Muddy River appear to have identified themselves with the Tselo'na through intermarriage. Eastward, the Nelson people hunt to the Rocky Mountains and in the past crossed these ranges to trade at Fort Nelson, from whence they derive their name.

In 1944-45, Lower Post, located at Milepost 620 on the Alaska Highway (Pl. 1), was the main trading post serving all of these tribes. A smaller outpost, supplied by air freight, served a portion of the Frances Lake Indians. Less than five years before, however, trading posts were in operation at McDame Creek, eighty miles up Dease River from Lower Post, and at the head of Dease Lake.

To the south and southwest the Kaska are adjoined by the Tahltan Indians, trading at Telegraph Creek on the Stikine River. To the west, across the barrier of the Cassiar Mountains, the Dease River and Upper Liard Indians occasionally meet the Taku Indians trading at Teslin Lake Post. Beyond the Taku are the Tlingit Indians, occupying the Alaska panhandle. On the north the Kaska are bounded by the Pelly River Indians (Tutchone nation). To the northeast are the Mackenzie (Mountain) Indians and, east, the Espato'tena and Slave Indians of Fort Nelson, Nelson Forks, and Fort Liard. The Slave refer to the Kaska as "Grand Lakers," which is apparently a translation of tutlo'tena, the present day Kaska term of reference for the Frances Lake people. Occupying the middle and upper Muddy River are the Sekani bands already referred to, who divide their trade between Lower Post and Whitewater (Fort Ware), on the Finlay River.

[2] This statement would not hold if the present monograph included the Goat Indians, or Espato'tena, who trade into Fort Liard and Simpson. In the system of classification adopted for the Northern Athapaskans, these people have commonly been grouped as Kaska (see Osgood, *The Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* [1932], 396). Since such classification is primarily on a linguistic basis and because no study of the Espato'tena has yet been reported, the validity of their classification with the Kaska may legitimately be questioned, especially if reasons for doubt can be advanced. Contrary evidence comes from Old Man stating, on the basis of brief acquaintance with this tribe, that he could not too well understand their dialect. This suggests that the provisional grouping of the Espato'tena with other Kaska tribes may be incorrect.

A somewhat cursory examination of the dialect of the Tselo'na people tends to warrant their exclusion from the Kaska nation, despite their proximity to the latter. See Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia* (1937), 5, 10; Osgood, *The Distribution of the Northern Athapaskan Indians* (1932), 17.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

refers to an unrelated married woman by the first name of the husband with the prefix "missus." Between two women, the given name is generally employed.

Larger Social Groups

Social organization beyond kinship is of slight functional significance in Kaska society and, even more than the kinship system, is largely of categorical importance. The organization of the Kaska nation into tribes occupying loosely defined geographical districts has already been discussed.[7] There are four tribes known as the Frances Lake, Upper Liard River, Dease River, and Nelson Indians. The degree of emotional identification is relatively slight and would seem to be highest among the Upper Liard Indians. Here, however, relations between intertribal neighbors are, as we shall see, riddled by considerable suppressed antagonism. Although there is a tendency to restrict marriage within tribal units, many marriages have taken place between these units with a consequent diffusion of tribal membership and identification.

No single pattern for determining membership in a specific district or tribe seems to obtain. Old Man reported that a man belongs to the country of his father. He called himself a Liard River Indian, although his father was a Pelly Indian and his mother belonged to the Liard River tribe. In general a person seems to belong to the tribal district or tribe in which he was born and raised, regardless of the tribe from which his parents originally came. This is not final, however. A man who changes his residence with marriage, generally becomes identified with the country in which he takes up residence and begins to trap. For a time, he continues to be referred to as belonging to the district from which he originally came. As his roots grow deeper in the adopted district, he begins to be identified with that tribe. Because of the frequent shifting of residence that occurred up to about thirty years ago, and the frequency of tribal intermarriage which still continues, the districts present a far from perfect correlation with tribal designation. For example, the bulk of families in the Frances Lake district are reported to have originally lived in the Upper Liard River region. Of the four family heads known as Upper Liard River Indians, only one was born in that region and his youth was spent in many parts of the total Kaska area.

Most of the Kaska Indians are divided into two nonlocalized, matrilineal "sides" or moieties, the members of each of which feel vaguely related.[8] Although these sides are identified by the names of two animals, the Crow and Wolf respectively, there is little thought that a person has actually descended from a wolf or crow. Since neither of these two animals is customarily eaten, it is meaningless to talk of totemic food taboos. Both animals are readily killed, however, and the wolf is trapped for fur as well as for the bounty paid on the pelt. The importance of the moiety is slight. Formal organization is lacking, there being no executives and no mechanisms to bring about the unified functioning of the group as a whole. The principal functions of the moiety lie in the regulation of mar-

[7] See above, pp. 32–33.

[8] Writing in 1918, Allard gives the impression of a number of unilineal kin groups. "The tribe," he says, referring to the Kaska, "is divided into tribes, such as Wolf (tsi yo tshi), Crow (tsitshi), Bear (tsi), etc." No evidence of more than two component groups could be adduced. By the Bear "tribe," Allard is probably referring to the Bear Lake Indians, who trapped up along the Muddy River and ended into McDame Creek and Lower Post. Allard, *Notes on the Kaska and Upper Liard Indians* (1918), 19.

101 add to confusion are:

1) Two or more names are sometimes applied by different peoples (and even the same people) to one and the same band or division, and, again, two seemingly distinct divisions are sometimes called by the same name.

101 2) The nomadic nature of some of the bands, their wide range of wanderings; and the absence of
101 well-defined boundaries of tribes and bands, etc.

3) The overlapping of territories in some places for periods of years and even occasional overlapping of headquarters of bands, or migration of families and bands (sometimes temporarily) into old territories of other bands seeking better facilities for trading or hunting. It seems that some of these people then lose their old names and are called by new names or sometimes by the name of the people in whose country they settle.

101 4) Lack of the tribal sides /sic/ or of tribal differentiation among some of the Indians themselves - several of whom may call themselves by one name at one time and another name at another, because they may have lived or made their headquarters for a number of years at each of two or three localities, thus seemingly looking upon themselves as being entitled to one name as much as another. This is made all the easier because nearly all the designations of groups of people among the Athabaskans are really not designations of peoples as such, or tribes, or nations, but have reference only to locality or environment, which, if changed by the people, the term by which they are known soon becomes inapplicable. Besides this, some of the designations for groups of people are very general terms not derived from specific place-names, such as 'mountain or high ground people,' 'by /the/ lake people,' etc., terms which may be easily used for widely different peoples. However, although peoples are thus loosely designated by names of their general headquarters still there is evidence that a number of the names of divisions and tribes are quite old; the people carrying the names have made their headquarters in the same general locality for a long time back.

101 One other thing which may be mentioned here
197 is that although tribes of other linguistic stocks are
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generally well differentiated in the minds of the Indians, - excepting perhaps in a few places where there has been much intermixture or intermarriage, - tribes of Athabaskan lineage are not differentiated in the same way. The Indians seem to consider all within their ken as bands or scattered groups of the one family speaking the same kind of language differing only in slight degree in certain localities. They seem to take no cognizance, for instance, of the linguistic groups of Nahani, Sekani and Slave. With them, on the whole, the closer the dialect or the linguistic relationship seems to them the closer the blood relationship is thought to be. However, if a dialect /of, for instance,/ Nahani, seems to differ more or be less understandable to them than a dialect of Sekani, they will consider the latter the closer related, although the former is the closer of the two in-reality or according to the White man's point of view. It seems the languages of the Nahani group and the Sekani and Slave groups are on the whole rather closely related, although sufficiently distinct for separate grouping. Perhaps partly owing to this reason, the Indians have hardly any sense of the groupings.

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In the Handbook of American Indians the following are given as the divisions of the Nahani group.

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1. Tahltan	Tahltan Division	Drainage basin of Stikine River and its tributaries as far as the mouth of Iskut River, Dease Lake, and the river halfway to McDames Creek the northern sources of the Nass and some of the southern branches of the Taku in Alaska and British Columbia,
2. Takutine		Teslin River and Lake and upper Taku River, the basin of the Big Salmon River extending north to the Pelly River and east to the Upper Liard River,
3. Titshotine	Kaska Division	Between the Cassiar Mountains and the Liard and Dease Rivers,
4. Etagottine		

5. Esbetaottine (Bighorn people?) Mountains between the Liard River and the Peace River, British Columbia,

136 However, very little of the Tahltan country lies within this wet belt. In the valley of the Lower Stikine the annual precipitation is estimated to be 100 inches or over, whilst in most parts of the Interior it probably does not exceed 15 to 25 inches. The southern part of the Tahltan country towards and around the head /waters/ of the Nass has more rainfall and snow fall than the northern and central parts and consequently this part of the country is on the whole more timbered.

The extremes of temperature are great. It seems the greatest summer heat in the valleys is from 85 to 95° in different localities, depending a good deal on altitude, and in winter the greatest cold from 45 to 60 below zero F.

137 The principal trees are black pine, spruce (of two or three kinds,) balsam, willow, birch, alder and aspen. Hemlock, balsam, cedar and poplar are common in the valleys of the Cascades. Larch, Douglas fir and several kinds of pine so common in the Southern Interior are entirely wanting. Larch of some kind however is reported in certain localities further east in the Kaska country and elsewhere beyond the boundaries of the Tahltan, and cypress is reported to occur in the valley of the Iskut. (For a further description of the characteristics of the Tahltan country see Emmons pp. 9-11).

Tribal Boundaries

131 619 I spent considerable time with a number of informants trying to locate as correctly as possible the boundaries or approximate boundaries of the territories claimed by the Tahltan. Generally speaking, the Tahltan boundary on the west follows the axis of the Cascade or Coast Range, but the central part of the range is seldom penetrated except at a few points, as it is practically nothing but a sea of high rocky peaks and glaciers almost devoid of life. The lower eastern part of the range next /to/ the Interior plateau is the only portion really used by the Tahltan. There is a break in the general western boundary line of the Tahltan in the neighborhood of the Iskut and Stikine Rivers. Here the Tlingit claimed the river valleys on the Iskut to almost through the Cascade range, and on the Stikine to well beyond the range into the Interior to a point at least about or a little above Glenora, according to some informants,

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or to /7/ miles above Telegraph Creek, according to most informants. This is a distance of nearly 170 miles from the mouth of the River. They claimed complete right of way on these rivers as far up as the points mentioned and have been known to extort payment from Tahltan who wanted to go to the lower river or coast. The Tlingit at one time had a permanent settlement on the Iskut at the Forks and another some miles further up the main river. On the Stikine they always had a number of summer camps from the Canyon up to Glenora, where they dried salmon and gathered and cured berries. Besides these they had some temporary trading camps. They did very little hunting along the river, and in fact there was little to hunt excepting goats and bears, of which there were also plenty in their own country. It seems they seldom ventured far back in the hills anywhere, but kept close to their camps on the river. Before the cold weather set in and ice commenced running in the river they left for the Coast. The Tahltan then had complete control of the river as far down as about the mouth of the Iskut, for in the winter time, it seems, Tlingit hardly ever camped above this point. However, only a few of the Tahltan made any use of the river valley below the Clearwater River and that chiefly for trapping of furbearing animals. (It is said they could not cure salmon and berries properly in their own country without the aid of smoke and heat from fires as the climate was too wet. In the Interior, however, they could dry them in the sun and wind.)

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The Stikine River valley between the mouth of the Iskut and Telegraph Creek was thus used to some extent by both Tlingit and Tahltan, both claiming certain rights there, but neither tribe had any headquarters nor permanent abode there, nor was there anything very conducive in the nature of the country and its resources and climate to promote permanent settlement.

On the north the Tahltan boundary, from about longitude 131W., its most western point, ran northeasterly parallel to the Taku and Nakina Rivers some considerable distance back from them on the south or east sides. It seems to have crossed the Inklin River a little lower than halfway between its mouth where it joins the Taku and its head at the mouth of the Sheslay. Continuing north easterly to near the head of Teslin Lake /the boundary/ passed just west of Spruce Mountain

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131 in this part touching some of the sources of the Nakina.
619 Embracing all or nearly all the small lakes at the head of Atlin Lake, it continued north easterly across the Jennings River not far from its mouth. The Tahltan thus possessed all the Nahlin, the other large feeders of the Taku from the east, and the southern sources of the Yukon which run into Teslin Lake. From the head of the latter lake or from the Jennings River their boundary ran to and beyond the water-shed dividing the waters running into the Yukon on the one hand and the Mackenzie on the other in latitude 60 N. Here it seems they claimed hunting rights on the upper Rancheria River and the whole country adjoining that stream to its junction with the Liard, where their territory ran to a point and they had a trading place. This was their most northern point. Bending back around the head of Blue River their line seems to have run south and south-easterly, crossing Dease River about the mouth of the Cottonwood and continuing across the sources of the Muddy River almost to longitude 127 W., probably the most eastern point of their territory. From here their line followed the center of the Cassiar Mountains south and south westernly between the sources of the Stikine and Finlay to the head waters of the Skeena, which they seem to have crossed somewhere to the east of Ground Hog Mountain. Continuing, their boundary followed the watershed between the Skeena and Nass Rivers to about latitude 56, (its) most southern point. Thence their line ran west crossing the upper Nass somewhere near the mouth of Cottonwood Creek, reaching the Cascades again somewhere near the heads of Bear and Salmon Rivers. It will thus be seen that the Tahltan occupied much of the headwaters of the Nass and some of the head waters of the Skeena as well as certain feeders of the Liard. It seems there may have been some overlapping of territory along Dease River, as some Tahltan claim they had right of way or control of the country down as far as McDames Creek, where they sometimes went to trade, whilst the Kaska claim they hunted the country up as far as Dease Lake. It seems the Tahltan did very little hunting below Canyon River or certainly little or none below Cottonwood River and Eagle Rivers.

131 NOTE: I found it rather hard to get a full under-
619 standing of the approximate boundaries of the Tahltan,
361 as some persons had a knowledge of some but not of others. There may have been some changing or extension of boundaries within the last 100 years in certain places owing to trade and some changing of headquarters.

Boundaries are less well defined than /those of/ tribes further south, because /the Tahltan were?/ more nomadic and /had/ no real permanent villages formerly. Also certain families through intermarriage with neighbors, especially in the east and west, appear to have ranged over and used territory of both tribes.

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Upper Liard

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Two grandparent and four sibling terms (generally extended to parallel cousins) are found throughout the area. In general the kin terms are consistent with a system that includes matrilocal residence, matrilineal moieties, sororal polygyny, sororate, and asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage with the MoBrDa or FaSiSo.[9]

SOCIAL UNITS LARGER THAN THE FAMILY

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Two permanent social groupings larger than the family or kin group may be distinguished in the Cassiar, the band and the moiety. It is scarcely possible to discern fixed economic or social classes, the latter term referring here simply to a distinction between rich and poor families. The term "band" designates the microcosmic extended family group with its unrelated hangers-on or adopted children. Several such units occupying contiguous districts constituted the unorganized and highly amorphous macrocosmic band for which we have used the word "tribe."[10] Beyond speaking a similar dialect and intermarrying, the component units of a macrocosmic band experienced little feeling of solidarity. Vague shifting boundaries further reduced the integration of these groups. As already pointed out, relatively large aggregates of people remained in temporary association around a fish lake in summer and winter. Such transitory villages, however, probably did not usually include an entire macrocosmic band, although the pattern of living and playing together, like marriage, must have counteracted feuding and thus strengthened the integration of the people in a territory.

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Upper Liard Kaska. Bordering the twisting valley of the upper Liard River lay the territory exploited by the extended-family bands of the Natitu?agotena. Little could be recalled about these units except that on occasion, in winter and summer, many of them camped in one place (tenanat?klone, "lots of people stay together"). Each of the migratory bands recognized a headman. As one informant said, "Before the arrival of the white men there were many bosses" (X). These leaders were primarily family heads so that, according to Chapple and Coon's system of analysis, true (i.e., interfamily) political organization remained only incipiently realized in aboriginal Kaska society.[11] The headman's ability as a hunter, a quality that attracted people to join his band, also helped him to accumulate wealth. When need required, his food resources were freely distributed among the band members. A leader held authority as long as he lived. Upon death a son succeeded to the position of family chief. Should the youth be a poor or indifferent hunter, any other man in the band might be called upon to assume leadership. The death of a headman probably caused a redistribution of the band's personnel around one or more new leaders. Leaders who lost competence found themselves ignored, the people adhering to a more intelligent man. The headman's functions transcended mere food getting. His wisdom derived from experience, and the ability to speak convincingly reinforced his authority in moral matters. When food resources ran low the

[9] See below, pp. 131, 135.

[10] This terminology was first employed to describe the social organization of the Fort Nelson Slave. Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 64-65.

[11] These writers have defined true political authority as arising when one individual or group originates action to persons other than his kin. Chapple and Coon, *Principles of Anthropology* (1942), 330.